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ABSTRACT

In 1989, the Kentucky Supreme Court declared that the state's public school system was unconstitutional and ordered the Kentucky legislature to create a new system of public education. The Kentucky General Assembly then enacted the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 (KERA). This book sets forth the policy assumptions underlying KERA and outlines the successes and difficulties Kentucky experienced in implementing these policies. Special attention is given to whether a specific policy proved to be unsound or whether its implementation was flawed in some way. Serious omissions that still have not been adequately addressed are pointed out. The 16 chapters cover the mandate to change, a statement of principles, a new approach to curriculum, the curriculum in the classroom, academic performance standards, monitoring student progress (continuous assessment), a fair start for every child (nongraded primary program), support for students (extended school services and family service centers), technology in the classroom, redefining a school, the role of school councils, responsibility for results (accountability and school consequences), defining school improvement, measurement of improvement, accountability revisited, and concluding thoughts. Although it is too early to know if student learning has improved as expected, the book concludes that, for the most part, KERA has been implemented as intended. (Contains references in each chapter and an index.) (TD)

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